

**THE COMMITTEE.** Some of Secretary of State Rusk's interrogators at his recent two-day appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "The mere fact of his testifying was an event of great moment."

*Clifford P. Case, New Jersey*



*Wayne Morse, Oregon*



*Chairman J. W. Fulbright, Arkansas*



*Mike Mansfield, Montana*



*Joseph S. Clark, Pennsylvania*



*Frank Church, Idaho*

WASHINGTON.

**S**HORTLY after Lyndon Johnson became President, one of his closest unofficial advisers remarked that the country was about to learn something: "We're going to find out whether or not we have a Secretary of State."

The country has found out with a vengeance. Dean Rusk is Secretary of State. "One of the greatest in our history," the President says. "He has his hands on Vietnam," echoes Walt Rostow, the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, "and on every other major thread of policy."

Not only that, but he cuts quite a figure in the nation at large. He is a target of abuse for some—during his visit to New York last November 3,000 people protested his presence, pelting police with eggs, stones and bags of cow's blood. He is a subject of reverential admiration for others, who express their feelings in a torrent of appreciative letters. The mere fact of his recent public testimony on Vietnam before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, after a lapse of two years, was an event of great moment.

Not only that, but the emergence of Rusk has been so dramatic that it is even recognized by the self-effacing Secretary himself. Concern that his own prominence might rub off on Senate opponents of the Administration had been one of the reasons he had initially refused to testify. "Why," he asked at one point, "should I contribute to Gene McCarthy's campaign?"

But how did so large a shadow come to be cast by a man so bland, pallid and cautious, so much the attendant lord, that it was unclear whether he really was the Secretary

**JOSEPH KRAFT** is a nationally syndicated columnist who specializes in politics.

# The Dean Rusk Show

By JOSEPH KRAFT

of State? What happened to Dean Rusk?

**T**HE right answer is the answer that springs to everybody's mind—Vietnam. Dean Rusk may not be a man for all seasons, but he is a man for the season of adversity. With the Administration at bay, Rusk has come forward as the President's star defender—a doughty, hard-bitten, gritty adversary, ready to take on all

comers without yielding an inch, even at the expense of playing the heavy in a way that draws obloquy upon himself while leaving all the grace notes to the President. In everything he does, and especially in the way he does it, Rusk creates the atmosphere dear to Lyndon Johnson—the atmosphere of a beleaguered President struggling mightily for the right against treacherous foes at home and abroad. "He is Colonel Rusk," says

the wife of one of his colleagues, "manning the last outpost at Khesanh on the Potomac."

The siege mentality of the Secretary found almost perfect expression in the recent Senate hearings. Rusk testified, one man facing the 18 Senators on the committee, for a period of 11 hours ranging over two consecutive days. Ceaselessly and unrelentingly he iterated and reiterated a single tenacious theme of "over-

whelming importance"—the theme that this country must stand by its commitments. Despite the incessant pressure, he never once yielded to the demand by committee chairman J. W. Fulbright that the Administration seek advance approval from the Senate for any new increase in troop strength in Vietnam. And when all the verbal fireworks were over, nothing seemed to have happened.

The Administration was satisfied that its man had made a gallant stand. President Johnson spoke of the hearing publicly as "the Dean Rusk show." After the first day, the Secretary stopped off at the White House for a short visit with the President and a few aides. One of them said of the meeting: "I have never seen people feel more warmly. We were full of admiration for a colleague, for his steadiness and lucidity and courtesy. He handled himself with grace under pressure."

Most of Rusk's senatorial critics were rueful. "God, he's slick," one muttered when Rusk, in the course of his testimony, let it casually slip out that he had been to see the President one Sunday—after Mr. Johnson had returned from church. A liberal Republican, comparing the text of Rusk's most recent committee appearance with his testimony of two years ago, said: "No wonder he knows all the answers. He repeats whole paragraphs almost word for word. That shows how stubborn he is, how little he's changed his mind."

At the State Department one of Rusk's colleagues remarked: "It was a vintage Rusk performance. He showed the skill of a professional negotiator in not yielding a single point without getting something in

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**THE WITNESS.** Dean Rusk at the hearings. "How did so large a shadow come to be cast by a man so bland?"

## The Dean Rusk Show (Cont.)

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return. He never humiliated anybody on the other side. He defended the Vietnam effort, but not with phony numbers and bogus documents that give an impossibly rosy impression which is later used against the President. He admitted setbacks, but in a way that suggested this country should not cut losses, but go on bearing this and other burdens."

**T**HE defensive qualities which rose so strongly to the challenge of the Senate hearings are now equally apparent in the face Rusk turns to the public when there is no special occasion—not that he has ever been flamboyant. As the product of a very simple Georgia background, he has an instinctive distaste for flashiness, and he has never cut a dashing figure. In the past, his actions at least sometimes had the common touch. He once allowed himself to be photographed leading a group of State Department officials to a bowling match. On another occasion, visiting Davidson College in North Carolina, where he was once a center on the basketball team, Rusk stepped into the gym and sank a couple of long ones. Washington's equivalent of the jet set years ago certified his status as a square by giving him the sarcastic nickname, "Dean Baby."

But nowadays the Secretary holds himself aloof from the public in a posture of Spartan self-denial. Any hint that he is just a regular fellow, or a good guy, is hushed up. Last fall, for example, Rusk's younger son asked if two of his Cornell classmates might spend the night at the Rusk home in Washington; they were in town to participate in the protest march on the Pentagon. The Secretary said, "Sure." As it happened, the boys did not pick up the offer. Still, knowledge of the incident would have appealed to many of Rusk's critics. But he sat on the story.

Similarly, although the recent marriage of his daughter Peggy to a Negro was a subject that would gain him points with liberal foes, Rusk has refused to comment on it. And in the same vein, though it is well known that on trips to California the Secretary visits the newlyweds at Stanford University, he refuses to allow the State Department press office to confirm the visits.

The on-duty face which the

Secretary turns to the public seems also to be the face he turns to his family. By all accounts, Pop, as the three Rusk children call their father, used to spend a lot of time at home—like other fathers, watching television, particularly the news shows, and reading, notably in American history. But now Rusk is rarely home for dinner. When the Rusks go out, it is almost always to an official do. Even at a rare private party, the Secretary usually grabs another guest and goes off to a corner to talk business. His wife has expressed wonder to other official wives at their knowing when their husbands were coming home to dinner.

Mrs. Rusk has an office at the State Department and is assiduous in filling in for the Secretary at the receptions offered by foreign embassies for their various national days. But though they work closely together, the Secretary on occasion even seems to do the Spartan bit with his wife. She was once asked whether the Secretary was upset by a particularly virulent protest demonstration staged during a recent visit he made to the University of Indiana. "If he was," she said, "he wouldn't tell me."

**W**ITHIN his own department Rusk is positively formidable. For one thing, he works all the time. He reaches the office around 9 o'clock each morning and gets home, usually after an official function, just before midnight. He comes in to the office almost every Saturday and usually, for a little while at least, on Sundays. This past year, he worked both the Christmas and New Year's weekends. In the past seven years (he took office on Jan. 20, 1961), he has had fewer than seven weeks of vacation.

According to a formal State Department study of a typical Rusk month, the Secretary's activities come under five major headings: advising the President—11 visits to the White House for a total of 17 hours, not including the time necessary for preparation; managing the department—more than 100 meetings with members of State's Washington staff and 19 separate meetings with visiting American ambassadors; consultation with members of Congress—11 trips to the Capitol, a total of more than 22 hours; discussions with foreign officials—one trip abroad,

...other to Texas to meet a head of State visiting the L.B.J. ranch, and 21 individual appointments with emissaries from abroad, not to mention 13 luncheons, dinners and receptions at which he played host-and 19 others at which he was a guest; informing the public—three radio-TV interviews, seven interviews with authors of books or magazine articles, six background news conferences with regular State Department news correspondents.

The endurance required to follow that kind of schedule month after month and year after year is the more remarkable in that Rusk does all the wrong things physically. He is close to being a chain smoker. He gulps down Scotches—often in the late afternoon, sometimes in the morning. He exercises only very rarely. From time to time, to be sure, there have been signs of the strain. "I have seen him coming home from a trip abroad green with fatigue," a colleague in the State Department says. On his 59th birthday on Feb. 9, Rusk told a group of newsmen (at an off-the-record background briefing, since made public) that criticism of the Administration's Vietnam policy had reached the point when "the question is, whose side are you on?"

But if the Secretary is sometimes overtired, he does have the ability to make a quick, overnight recovery—"I go to sleep as soon as my head hits the pillow," he says. Most of the time he looks not green but pink with health. Though he walks in small steps for so big a man, he moves with great speed. His carriage is strikingly erect. Richard Helms, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has mused that "whatever keeps Dean Rusk going ought to be bottled." Benjamin Read, the executive secretary of the State Department, says: "Dean Rusk is the Lou Gehrig of government."

Still, there are plenty of people around town who doubt whether all the time spent on the job is really necessary. "I know," one State Department official asserts, "that he didn't need to come in over last Christmas weekend. There was nothing happening then." An Assistant Secretary adds: "Work is Dean Rusk's hair shirt."

**T**HERE used to be a theory that the Secretary's industry was connected with the fact that he was surrounded by more prestigious figures. Early in the Kennedy Administra-

tion Rusk had under him four former governors who had been Presidential possibilities—Adlai Stevenson of Illinois at the United Nations, Chester Bowles of Connecticut as Under Secretary, Averell Harriman of New York as Ambassador-at-Large and G. Mennen Williams of Michigan as Assistant Secretary for Africa. Crudely put, the theory was that Rusk kept his nose to the grindstone as a kind of counter-snob tactic, pointing up his own solid virtues as against the more flashy and glamorous qualities of the former governors.

But the Secretary has long since asserted his mastery at the department. While nobody pretends to understand his relationship with Under Secretary Nicholas Katzenbach and Under Secretary for Political Affairs Eugene Ros-tow, they are new boys who do not challenge his primacy. The Assistant Secretaries—John Leddy for Europe, William Bundy for the Far East, Lucius Battle for the Near East, Covey Oliver for Latin America, Joseph Palmer for Africa and Joseph Sisco for the United Nations—are the Secretary's men. Like him, they have all put in long years in the bureaucracy, most of them as postwar drop-ins, who joined the Government in mid-career after World War II service. Like him, they tend

to be tough and bright and cautious for punishment.

Still, the personal relationship is frosty, and nothing shows it better than the tales the Assistant Secretaries tell to prove their intimacy with the boss. One asserts that he is always jibing Rusk about overinvolvement in Asia. Another reports that the Secretary has asked him to keep on disagreeing with him when he feels he should. A third says: "I call him Dean all the time. It's good for him to be called Dean."

Rusk's relationship with the rest of the department could hardly be more formal. Though his personal aides sit 20 feet outside his office, and see him all the time, they preface every memo with the salutation, "Sir." He allows the White House, the Congress and the departmental machinery to wish on him dozens of special assistants. He has done nothing to alter the system by which Foreign Service regularly nominates mediocrities for State Department jobs—indeed, he has frustrated efforts at reform. "Dean Rusk," one high official in the department says, "suffers fools gladly."

**I**N days past, it was felt that Rusk sought to buttress his authority in his department by aligning himself with the

Pentagon, notably with former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. And once there may have been something to this theory. Thus Rusk allowed Pentagon budgetary considerations to dictate the timing and manner of the cancellation of the Skybolt missile program though State Department officials warned him that, because Britain's nuclear weapons were linked to the Skybolt, cancellation would create a crisis in Anglo-American relations—as it did.

For years one of the regular complaints inside the State Department was that, in his handling of Vietnam, Rusk was too prone to yield political considerations for supposed military advantages. A particularly important example of this occurred after the Tonkin Gulf incident of 1964 when the Pentagon proposed basing bombers in South Vietnam. State Department officials, including Assistant Secretary William Bundy, argued against the bombers, saying such a move would be an over-reaction apt to tempt the other side to hit the bombers at their bases. Rusk phoned McNamara on the spot and asked if he really needed the bombers in Vietnam. When McNamara said yes, Rusk accepted the decision as his own, declaring, "In for a penny, in for a pound." As it happened, the bombers were hit on the ground at Bienhoa, one of the incidents which led directly to the systematic American bombing of North Vietnam.

But the time has long since passed when Rusk needed the backing of the Pentagon. As early as the fall of 1966, McNamara was turning to Rusk for support with the President in seeking a limitation on the bombing pattern in North Vietnam. In at least one case, Rusk carried the day for limitations after McNamara had lost the argument. And when McNamara's resignation was announced, Rusk spoke of his going in terms that denoted absolute parity. He said: "I feel as though I had lost a twin."

In these circumstances of bureaucratic parity, Rusk's affinity with the military is not merely a matter of office politics but one of personal taste. He has always been at home among soldiers. As he recently revealed, one of his ancestors fought as a general in the army of the Texas Free State. He joined the R.O.T.C. at age 12 in Boys' High in Atlanta he rose from captain to colonel in World War II and he was on the verge of becoming a regular officer in the



**WITH J.F.K.**—President Kennedy and Dean Rusk at the White House. During the years of the Kennedy Administration, "it was unclear whether Rusk really was the Secretary of State."

matters most precious to him. A striking case in point is the way he behaved at the time of his daughter's marriage. Though absolutely no racist himself, he had seen prejudice at first hand in the Deep South. He wondered aloud whether Southerners and conservatives in the Congress might not treat him as (his words) a "Typhoid Mary," but he was not worried about what he personally might have to bear. "He talked to me about it a little before the wedding," Under Secretary Nicholas Katzenbach says. "His concern was for the President and his standing in the country."

IT is possible to find dozens of cases where the Secretary has subordinated his own views to those of the President. During the Kennedy years for example, Rusk was not a strong enthusiast for arms control measures, particularly insofar as they cut across American military interests, or the interests of this country's major allies. It was Averell Harriman, not his boss Dean Rusk, who negotiated the partial test ban with Russia in 1963. Indeed, in a discussion of the proposed test ban, Rusk once told Adlai Stevenson that he would not yield "one iota of military strength to improve America's moral position in the world."

But when President Johnson at a meeting at Camp David last year made it plain that he wanted to get a nonproliferation treaty, Rusk, who was known to have had grave reservations about the treaty, went to work on it. He personally negotiated the basic draft with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. He personally smoothed matters over with the West Germans who opposed the treaty. As much as any man, Dean Rusk can probably claim credit for negotiating that treaty.

Nor is his loyalty to the President simply a matter of being willing to adjust his position on specific matters of importance. In a famous article published in 1960 in the magazine *Foreign Affairs* and read by President Kennedy before appointing him Secretary of State, Rusk wrote that "the President makes foreign policy." A subsequent article that was supposed to define the role of the Secretary of State never appeared. But it is a good bet that in Rusk's view the Secretary's job is to make it easier for the President to do what he has to do—to take the heat, and reduce the damage. As one long-time Rusk-

watcher has observed, "Rusk is a minimum breakage man."

DURING the Kennedy Administration, the President was mainly bent on trying to reach an understanding with the Soviet Union—the policy of détente. Pursuing that policy inevitably meant friction with American allies—notably the West Germans, and to some extent the governments of Asia. While President Kennedy and his closest associates concentrated on the approach to the Soviet Union, Rusk concentrated on reducing friction with the allies, traveling to Bonn to soothe the late German Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, or to Formosa to calm the Nationalist Chinese.

Rusk has also been at tremendous pains to minimize the damage associated with the Johnson Administration's foreign policy. He has been particularly concerned to limit the harm done to American-Soviet relations by events in Vietnam. He personally arranged the Glassboro meeting between President Johnson and Soviet Premier Kosygin. He has worked—with great effectiveness—to head off military acts in Vietnam which might particularly embarrass the Russians. It is mainly thanks to Rusk that the port of Haiphong, where Russian ships dock, has not been bombed, and he has had a strong dampening effect on any extension of the war to Laos and Cambodia in ways that would bring this country into confrontation with Russia.

Indeed, insofar as it has been possible to maintain working relations with Moscow while still fighting in Vietnam, the credit goes chiefly to Rusk. "I'm not going to claim that I know how to deal with the Russians," he told me recently. "Too many diplomatic reputations carry that claim on their tombstones. But I do find that I can talk to the Russians in a straightforward way without bluster or propaganda. And I find that when I talk to them that way, they respond without bluster or propaganda."

And once in that vein, once he was not on the defensive about Vietnam, Rusk could go on to survey the record of the past seven years. "Kennedy and Johnson and their Secretary of State," he said, "have tried to show that there does not have to be total hostility in the world. We haven't brought any new treaties of alliance against other countries to the Congress. We have broken up the pattern of across-the-board hate. We

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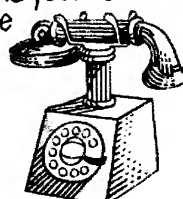
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Army until Gen. George Marshall brought him over from the Pentagon to the State Department in 1946.

Perhaps the major handle Rusk offers to a biographer is the quality of his admiration for Marshall, whom he more and more holds up for emulation. Some people who knew the general feel Rusk falls far short of his model. "The main thing about Marshall," one says, "is that he went after the jugular of events, the mainstream of history. Rusk is a detail man. He goes after Clause 47-B." But to say that is to miss the point about Rusk. For what Rusk most admires in Marshall, he says, is "his very high sense of public duty." The Secretary frequently cites a Marshall dictum: "Soldiers have morale problems. Officers don't."

The most striking embodiment of that creed is Rusk's unflinching acceptance of his role as the Administration's heavy in the Vietnam war. Time and time again it has fallen to him to darken the outlook for peace. Thus, in February, 1967, when Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin, at a televised press conference in Britain, raised hopes for negotiation, Rusk was deflating those hopes in a press conference held only hours later.

Rusk played his spoiler role even more strikingly when President Johnson broached his famous formula for peace in a speech in San Antonio, Tex. The President expressed a willingness to stop the bombardment of North Vietnam in exchange for prompt and "productive discussions" with the other side. He said the United States would "assume that while discussions proceed, North Vietnam would not take advantage of the bombing cessation." To "assume" so was a notable softening of a previous demand that Hanoi give some advance sign, and the President got the credit for easing up the terms.

A little bit of credit on the same theme also went to the new Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford. In the Congressional hearings prior to his confirmation, Clifford indicated that the phrase, "not take advantage," meant only not increasing the flow of supplies from North to South Vietnam above the "normal" level—a softening of the previous formula which seemed to insist on the termination of the flow of supplies.

But when the Tet offensive caused Washington to harden its position last month, Rusk did the dirty work. In a speech on Feb. 14 he said: "At

no time has Hanoi indicated publicly or privately that it will refrain from taking military advantage of any cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam." And that statement, of course, implied that the United States was no longer "assuming" that the other side would not take advantage of a bombing cessation and wanted some advance sign—a return to the position taken before the San Antonio formula.

**I**N presenting the tough line, moreover, Rusk does not mince words, or seek cover in complicated circumlocution. He has always been known for his capacity to turn out pithy—some might say corny—colloquialisms. For example, the "eyeball-to-eyeball" description of the Cuban missile crisis was his. He states his case on Vietnam with an inventive fertility that is truly extraordinary: "We want to talk, but the other side won't pick up the phone" . . . "The war will be over as soon as the other side decides to leave its neighbor alone" . . . "You can't end half a war." If nothing else, the Secretary is the leading rhetorician—indeed, the poet laureate—of the Vietnam debate. It is typical that after the seizure of the U.S.S. Pueblo, he came up with still another lapidary phrase: "My strong advice to the North Koreans is to cool it."

Rusk's statement of his position has undoubtedly helped win him wide support. Most of the Congress is with him; the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in an unusual step, recently presented him with a letter of confidence signed by all but two members. And the Secretary has had rousing ovations recently in speeches before groups of veterans and labor leaders and at a Lions convention.

Within 48 hours of his recent appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Rusk received 1,000 telegrams. They ran 10-to-1 in his favor. And his day-long televised appearance before the same committee two years ago also yielded hundreds of letters, favorable to Rusk in a ratio of 10-to-1. A real-estate man from Columbus, Ohio, wrote: "In my humble opinion you come closest to filling Lincoln's shoes." A Miami housewife: "If I had any doubts before, they were all erased by your eloquent answers." A young mother from Oklahoma: "I wanted to grab my flag and shout GLORY—several times." A teacher from Salt Lake City



**WITH L.B.J.**—President Johnson listens to Rusk at a White House meeting. Rusk has come into his own during the Johnson Administration as the President's "star defender" on the issue of Vietnam—"a doughty, hardbitten, gritty adversary, playing the heavy in a way that draws obloquy upon himself while leaving all the grace notes to the President."

sent "congratulations on your policy of no appeasement."

But the plain speaking which wins such plaudits from supporters of the Vietnam war rubs salt into the wounds of the doubters. A former president of the Rockefeller Foundation and professor at Mills College, Rusk was once a campus familiar, one of the all-time champion degree collectors. Now he gets picketed at Indiana University and has to cancel a scheduled appearance at Stanford to avoid pickets. Former colleagues in the Kennedy Administration—notably Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Richard Goodwin of the White House staff and Roger Hilsman of the State Department—have assailed him primarily for not stating his views forthrightly within that Administration, for being, as Schlesinger wrote, "a Buddha." And many members of the Washington press corps have had a bellyful of Ruskian homilies. One press jest has Rusk taking a reporter aside and whispering to him, in confidential tones, "Off-the-record, and strictly between us and not for publication, I will say that the war would be over if the other side stopped fighting."

In response to Vietnam critics, the Secretary draws heavily on the officer-enlisted man theme—the distinction between solid men of responsibility and frivolous, self-indulgent fault-finders. Thus, on a recent session of the TV program Meet The Press, a reporter who asked whether the Vietnamese might not be put off by American bombing of sections of Saigon and Huế in response to the Tet offensive was told: "I have no doubt there are some people in South Vietnam who are grum-

py." And at the Feb. 9 background briefing the Secretary had this to say in response to a question suggesting the possible lack of advance intelligence of the Tet offensive: "Now during World War II there was never a time when you couldn't find a reason to bitch at your allies or at intelligence or the commander of the adjoining unit or the quartermaster who wasn't giving you your portable toilet seat at the right time. There wasn't a time when you couldn't find something to bitch about."

In response to students who criticize Vietnam policy, Rusk cites their vulnerability to "the organized effort by the Communist apparatus" and then takes up the theme of the generational gap: "The young people who haven't experienced any other war feel that the war in Vietnam is something that is all fresh and different, that it has nothing to do with other crises. A lot of the arguments I hear now against the war are the same ones people used once in the thirties, the same sort of things people said to me in the thirties in arguing against arming or preparing for a war against Germany."

To his former colleagues in the Kennedy Administration, with their critical public revelations of private top-level talks, the Secretary speaks of the responsibility officials have to maintain privacy of communication. He says that when he leaves office, "I don't expect to take papers away with me. I'm somewhat like Secretary Marshall in that regard."

To the intellectual community, he cites the case of the naive scientist: "Friends used to say of Einstein that he was a genius in mathematical

physics, an amateur in music and a baby in politics. Now, I think that an idea stands or falls on its own merits, and the fact that a man knows everything there is to know about enzymes doesn't mean that he knows very much about Vietnam or how to organize a peace, or the life and death of nations."

**A**S for critics in the press, the Secretary said of one celebrated commentator who wrote an article critical of Rusk's handling of Vietnamese peace negotiations: "When a man gets \$40,000 for an article, I cease to believe in his veracity." And at the Feb. 9 background briefing, the Secretary said: "None of your papers or your broadcasting apparatus are worth a damn unless the United States succeeds. They are trivial compared to that question. So I don't know why, to win a Pulitzer Prize, people have to go probing for the things that one can bitch about when there are 2,000 stories on the same day about things that are more constructive in character."

These comments, of course, are only further evidence of Rusk with his dukes up—the siege mentality. They don't begin to represent the case that can be made for the Secretary. Indeed, the best case is one the Secretary cannot himself make directly because it turns on his relationship with the President.

Abundant evidence suggests that Rusk is usually acting less on his own initiative than on that of the man in the White House. His sense of duty is strong to the point of subordinating himself to the President's interest even on